

"HOOTS!"

by

J. J. BELL

Author of "Wee MacGreegor."





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FOREWORD



SOME of these little stories made me laugh forty years ago, and maybe, they were old ones then ; but having proved them to be new to my younger friends, I give them place in this collection. Others have provided me with chuckles in more recent years, and I pass them on, hopefully. Others, again, are, as the man proudly said of the fibs told to his wife, entirely my own inventions, and any responsive smiles from the reader will be gratefully esteemed.

In a sense, the funniest thing about a joke is its uncertainty. Like the passenger in the modern bus, it may get home—or it may not. Still, I trust that a good many of these little travellers may get there, and be welcomed as momentary diversions from this predicament which we call Life.

J. J. B.



QUEER.

"It's a queer thing, Joanna," Mr Craw observed, in one of his philosophic moods, "but whiles I look at ye wi'oot seein' ye."

"Ay, John," returned Mrs Craw, "and whiles I see through ye wi'oot lookin' at ye."

THE LUCKY BAG.

Wee Johnny was taken, for the first time, to attend worship in a church where collecting bags were used. In due time a bag was passed along the pew, and after he had handed it on he said in an audible whisper : "Whit did you get, Maw ? I got a shullin' !"

RIGHTO !

A commercial traveller employed by a North of Scotland firm telegraphed from the South as follows :—
“ Business impossible. Held up by storm and floods. Wire instructions.”

Promptly came the reply :

“ Take your summer holidays as from yesterday.”



HE MEANT WELL.

Mrs Brown was giving a tea-party to some of her husband's relations who were somewhat higher in the social scale than herself. She was accordingly nervous and ill at ease generally, and the strain was not relieved when her little boy, in a more than audible whisper, said—

“ Tak' yer usual, Maw. See hoo the strangers is eatin' ! ”



JOHN'S EULOGIES.

He had been a notoriously bad husband, but now that he lay, still and harmless, in the upper room, the condoling neighbours crowding the parlour, drinking tea, etc., poured out eulogy after eulogy on the deceased.

At last the widow, who had listened patiently and politely, got up.

“ Excuse me, freens, for a meenute, ” she said ; “ I jist want to step up the stair, to see if it's really John that's deid.”



THE THING THAT MATTERED.

A dreamy-looking man rang the bell. After some delay, the ring was answered by a woman with a sorrowful countenance.

"Guid morning, Mistress Dron," said the visitor drowsily. "Is John in?" "Ay, he's in."

"Can I see him for a meenute?" "Na, ye canna see him."

"Hoo that?" "John's deid."

"Deid!" murmured the visitor, and scratched his head. "Dear, dear, that's an unco peety." A pause; then—"H'm, h'm! Eh—afore he dee'd—h'm, h'm!—did he happen to say onything—h'm, h'm!—about a wee pot o' green pent—eh?"

SIMPLE.

In Pittenweem a barber had fixed above the entrance to his shop one of those old fashioned poles with the red and white stripes. A native, being deeply impressed by its beauty, conceived the idea of decorating the door of his home in like manner. He accordingly betook himself to the oil and colour dealer and said—
 “What dae ye chairge for a pot o’ yon strippit pent?”

AFTERTHOUGHT.

The proprietor of a tradesman’s hotel called at the Police Office to report that two sheets had been stolen, adding that he suspected a guest named Taylor, who had disappeared, of the theft. The police promised to look out for Taylor. A few days later a tradesman called at the Office.

“Was the boss o’ the hotel here about twa sheets that was stolen?”

“He was,” replied the superintendent.

“Weel, I ken wha took them. It was a man o’ the name o’ Taylor; and his name’s no’ Taylor ava’; it’s Docherty; and he’s awa’ to Wishaw wi’ them.” The informant turned to go, then came back, as one who recollects something.

“And I can tell ye anither thing,” he said; “He’s awa’ wi’ ma’ wife as weel.”

CHARACTERISTIC.

Two Scotsmen, two Irishmen, and two Englishmen were shipwrecked on a desert island. A year passed, and then a ship appeared and sent a boat ashore. It was found that the Scots had formed a Caledonian Society; that the Irishmen had disappeared, having killed each other in a free fight; and that the Englishmen were still waiting to be introduced.



NO MISS.

A Londoner visiting St. Andrews for the first time was greatly intrigued by the game of Golf, and determined to learn it. Furnishing himself with the usual implements and a caddie, he went out before breakfast. It seemed easy, and his first drive was a terrific swipe. When the turf had ceased to descend, he turned, somewhat dazed, to the caddie, and asked—
 “What did I hit just now, my lad ?”
 “Scotland, Sir.”

A SCOTTISH LOVE SONG *(or so it seemed to a Sassenach)*

“ Oh, haud your whishts and dicht your nebs
 And scart your lugs forbye,
 And soop her up and ca’ awa’
 And kep the kittle kye ;
 For whigmaleerie’s in the pook,
 The clabbadoos is loupin’,
 The tapselteerie’s boot her e’e,
 The glaur is in the gowpen !

“ Oh, leeze me on the bogie roll
 That in the jawbox sooms,
 The baikie bummin’ by the byke,
 To snod the neeps and plooms !
 The champit tatties fleein’ laigh,
 Sae sweirt and blate and jaggy,
 The soor dook skirlin’ up the lum—
 They mind me o’ ma Maggie ! ”



THANKS.

Mrs Macdougall was unable to sleep for indigestion,
 and at 2 a.m. Mr Macdougall rose, dressed, went out,
 and knocked up the chemist.

“ Confound you, sir ! ” said the man of drugs, when
 he had heard the tale. “ Fancy calling me out of
 bed at such an hour for tuppence worth of bicar-
 bonate of soda, when a glass of hot water would do
 just as well ! ”

“ Weel, weel,” Macdougall returned, “ I’m greatly
 obleeged to ye for the advice, and I’ll no’ be troublin’
 ye for the soda, efter a’. Guid mornin’ ! ”



THE IDEA!

"Ye'll no' gi'e me awa', John?"

"Hoots, Jamie! When did I ever gi'e anything awa'?"

THE DIFFICULTY.

"You will be a first-rate dancer, Miss Macallister," said the teacher, "once you get the right poise."

"Yess, yess," answered Highland Mary; "but ta right poyss will pe fery hard to get, whateffer."

A SCOTCH ANSWER.

In a smoke-room a number of men were discussing the merits of different brands of cigarettes, while in a corner a solitary middle-aged person sat silent. At last one of the talkers turned to him, with the courteous question—

“Excuse me, sir, but if you are a smoker, may I ask what brand of cigarettes you happen to fancy?” The reply came promptly—

“Whit brand ha’e ye got?”

VERY LIKELY !

One morning, towards the end of the year, when the price of “hen’s fruit” had reached a scandalous figure, Mr Craw found in his breakfast egg a three-penny-bit.

“This is a most astounding occurrence” ! he remarked to his spouse. “How would ye explain it, Joanna?”

“Conscience money,” said Mrs Craw.

WHAT ?

Before going out to spend the evening at a neighbour’s, an Aberdonian couple stopped the clock in order to save time at home.

PREDICAMENT.

Late on a Saturday night, a countryman, who had evidently done himself well in Glasgow, was observed clinging to the hand-rail, half-way down the staircase leading to the low-level platforms of Queen Street Station, and was heard to mutter lugubriously : “Sic a predeecament—oh, sic a predeecament ! If I quate ma haun’ I’m shair to fa’, and if I haud on I’ll loss ma train !”



DIGNITY.

An Englishman, visiting a small Scottish town that did not possess even a picture-house, found it terribly dull, and said to a native :

“What do you do in this place when it rains ?”

“Oh, weel,” came the calm reply, “we just dinna interfere.”

PLUS FOURS.

An Aberdonian took to wearing plus fours because he had lost so many collar studs !

BRISK DIALOGUE BETWEEN TWO OLD SCOTS
ENJOYING AN EVENING TOGETHER.

1st. O. S.—“Ay!”

2nd. O. S.—“Imphm!”

1st. O. S.—“Jist that!”

2nd. O. S.—“Aweel, I’ll be gettin’ doon the road.”



MISDIRECTED.

The energetic and hearty Mrs Munro had taken her timid and lugubrious old friend, Mrs McLeerie, for a trip “doon the watter” on Fair Saturday. The crush on the steamer was something awful. Suddenly Mrs Munro nudged her companion and, all smiles, whispered:

“See thon young man, Mrs McLeerie? Weel, I never seen his like for politeness. Jist fancy! He apologised to me for staunin’ on ma fit—and he wasna!”

Mrs McLeerie sighed. “He didna apologise to me—and he was!”



THE INSULT.

Among the porters on the quay at Greenock, a good many years ago, was one of extremely small stature. On a certain afternoon, in his eagerness to catch the eye of a luggage-laden passenger on an incoming steamer, he fell over the edge, whereupon arose the cry from a score of voices:

“There’s a boy in the water!”

Then, in the pause, while would-be rescuers became active, an old woman wailed—

“Oh, whaur’s the puir laddie? I canna see him. Oh, whaur’s the puir laddie?”

From under the pier came up a voice, spluttering but furious—

“If ye dinna say it’s a man, I’ll no’ come oot th’ day!”



CHUST SO !

On a mountainside in Skye a ghillie was heard to address a distant and unobservant colleague in these passionate words—

“ Dougal, Dougal, did you’ll no’ hear me waving on you ? Ach, she may chust as weel haud her tongue as no’ speak ! ”



GLASGOW JAM !

An Aberdonian stood in Argyle Street with a loaf of bread in his arm, waiting on the Traffic Jam.



ADVICE.

A visitor, and an indifferent golfer, at a Scottish resort, got into conversation with a local lawyer, and before long they went out for a round together. In the course of the game the visitor wondered whether he ought to use the mashie or the niblick. The lawyer advised him. Next day, the visitor received an account: "To Advice—7s. 6d."



EXASPERATION.

"John," called Mrs Craw to her man who was "helping" in the scullery, "What are ye openin' that tin wi'?"

"A.....tin-opener, of course!"

"Weel, to judge frae your remarks, I would ha'e said ye was openin' it wi' prayer."



DID NOT SCORE.

"Do you know," asked Mr O'Flannigan, "the name of a play, in which one Irishman knocks out a whole gang of Scots?"

"Ay," answered Mr McPherson. "The Miracle."



SOMETIMES.

On the dusky road the minister, not recognising his parishioner's condition, called cheerfully in passing:

"Getting home, John?"

"Wh-whiles, Sir."



CHEESE IT!

"But whit's wrang wi' me?" he sadly asked, after she had rejected his proposal.

"There's naething exactly wrang wi' ye, Rubbert," she replied, "but the chap that mairries me maun be a strong, silent man, a man o' uncommon taste—"

"Hoots, lassie!" he interrupted, "it's no' a husband ye're wantin'—it's a Gorgonzola cheese!"

THE FRAGRANT WEED.

"I've nae use for thae cork-tipped ceegarettes," said Mr Craw; "I canna thole the taste o' the burnin' cork."

HOW IT HAPPENED.

“for, ye see, we had been at Moffat a’ day, and we was that wearit, and we had jist sat doon to a toosie tea in the parlour, wi’ ham and eggs, when Mary—that was oor second youngest—cam’ ben frae the kitchen and says, says she : ‘ Maw, the wean’s burnin’But, ye see, we was that wearit, for we had been at Moffat a’ day, and efter sic a lang day there’s naething sae refreshin’ as a nice toosie tea, wi’ ham and eggs, and I was jist in the midst o’ spreadin’ butter—fresh butter—on ma toast when Mary cam ben frae the kitchen again, and says, says she : ‘ Maw, the wean’s burnin’But, ye see, efter bein’ at Moffat a’ day we was that wearit—jist fair wabbit, in fac’—and John was at his second egg when Mary, oor third eldest, cam’ ben again frae the kitchen and says, says, she : ‘ Maw, the wean’s brunt’ And that’s hoo we lost oor wee Agnes.’ ”



FIVE PER CENT.

An old Highlander, having retired from his trade of fishing, opened a small shop in his remote little village. A tourist, who had known him in the past, came in one day and asked how business was doing.

“ Oh, not so bad,” Donald answered. “ She’ll be making five per cents on everything she is selling.”

“ Five per cent ! But surely you might make more than that, Donald ! ”

“ Oh, she’ll do, she’ll do ! What she was giving sixpence for she was selling for half-a-croon. Oh, ay, she’ll do ! ”



EXPLAINED.

Mrs Forgie stepped into Mr McNabb's grocery shop, in the Gorbals, slammed a paper bag on the counter, and said—

"Maister McNabb, thur biscuits o' yours is mowldy !"

"Mowldy, Mistress Forgie ?" he returned, frowning ;

"A mowldy biscuit never gaed oot o' ma shope !"

"If ye dinna believe me, smell them !" she retorted.

From the bag Mr McNabb took a biscuit and raised it cautiously to his nose. For a moment or two he appeared to be lost in anxious thought. Then his face cleared.

"Hoots, Mistress Forgie !" he said, smiling pleasantly,

"It's jist the smell o' the eggs !"

AND KICKED IT, TOO.

A raw deckhand on a Clyde coasting steamer, having been instructed to do some swabbing, dropped the bucket with rope attached overboard and, unprepared for the pull caused by the rush of water, was jerked after it.

A little later the mate went up to the captain on the bridge, and said casually :

“D’ye mind yon chap ye took on last Tuesday ?”


“Ay, what about him ?”

“Oh, naething. But he’s awa’ wi’ your bucket.”



VERY GRUDGING.

A few days before the nuptials of her fourth and only unmarried daughter Mrs McPhun said to her husband :
“It’s unco annoyin’, Samuel, but I doot we’ll ha’e to get new confetti for Sarah’s waddin’. Ye mind there was a shoo’er o’ rain when Maggie was gaun awa’, and the stuff we’ve got noo is kin’ o’ shabby-like.”



JUMBO.

When the celebrated monster, Jumbo, was on exhibition in this country, a Glasgow man, who was apparently unfamiliar with elephants, and who had evidently misunderstood the creature’s request for a bun, was heard to address it in these words :

“See here, ye muckle cahootchy beast, if ye pint your front tail at me again, I’ll ca’ the face aff ye !”



THE VERY THING.

An Aberdonian dining in a restaurant found a hairpin in his soup.

"Just what I was wantin' for ma pipe!" he remarked.



MURDERED SLEEP.

A Scotsman suffering from insomnia consulted a physician, who gave him a pretty powerful sleeping-powder—and charged him a guinea.

The Scotsman took the powder, but it was the worst night he had ever experienced.



AVAILABILITY.

“ Tickets all ready ! ”

Presently the collector came to a compartment, in a corner of which an old man drowsily reclined. The other passengers were ready with their bits of paste-board, but the old man took some rousing, and then, searching everywhere, failed to find his ticket.

At the end of three minutes the exasperated collector, with the impatient guard and stationmaster behind him, exclaimed—

“ Why, man, is that not it in your mouth ? ”

“ So it is.” The old man withdrew the ticket, wiped it dry, and delivered it up with humble apologies. The train moved on.

“ Funny place to carry your ticket, mister,” a young fellow remarked.

“ Maybe it seems funny to you, ma lad,” was the reply, “ but thon ticket was three year auld, and I was sookin’ the date aff.”



SCOTLAND FOR EVER !

An American acquaintance was showing a Scotsman Niagara Falls.

“ Well, Scottie,” he said complacently, “ how’s that for grand ? ”

The Scotsman sucked at his pipe reflectively. “ For grand, it’s no’ sae bad,” he said slowly ; “ but for queer—man, I wance seen a peacock at Peebles wi’ a wudden leg ! ”



SAFETY FIRST.

Late on Saturday night, a man in a tremulous state rushed into the Police Station crying—

“Lock me up, lock me up ! Ma wife was annoyin’ me, and I hit her owre the heid wi’ the fender.”

“Is she dead ?” asked the superintendent.

“Na, na ! That’s why I want to be locked up !”

A TIE.

Two Scots went bathing in the sea, and one bet a sixpence that he could stay longer under water than his companion, who promptly accepted the wager. The bodies have not yet been recovered.

*SINE DIE.*

A man about to pass over sent for his three friends, an Englishman, and Irishman and a Scotsman.

"In my time," he said, "I've been pretty good to you all, and now I'm going to ask you to shew your regard for me in an unmistakeable way. Before I'm taken to the tomb, I want each of you to place five pounds in my coffin. Do you promise?"

They promised, and in due time performed. First came the Englishman, who respectfully deposited five sovereigns; next, the Irishman, who sorrowfully put in a bank note; and, finally, the Scotsman who, gently remarking, "Jist cash it when it suits ye, John," took out the ten pounds and dropped in his cheque for fifteen.

*SOMETHING THEY HAD SPENT.*

Two Aberdonians met in Glasgow after many years absence and were found weeping in each other's arms. They had spent their youth together!

*RETORT COURTEOUS.*

Mr McTaggart, the oldest inhabitant, and a bit of a bore, went to call on the minister, who was a busy man. As he reached the manse gate he had a glimpse of the minister withdrawing from the study window. He was, therefore, somewhat taken aback when, presently, the maid informed him that the minister was not at home. But he quickly recovered.

"Aweel," he said, "jist tell the meenister when he comes hame, that I didna call."



BUSINESS IS BUSINESS.

A stranger from the South was walking among the Aberdeenshire hills when the mist came down, blanketing everything. For hours he wandered gropingly, calling continuously: "Help, help! I'm lost, I'm lost!"

He was giving way to despair when a voice hailed him out of the unknown.

"I'm hearin' ye," it said; "but what's the reward for findin' ye?"



HOW HE KEPT HIS JOB.

"Late again!" said Mr Clark, the grocer. "The fifth time this week!"

"I couldna help it," said Johnny, the message boy. "I slep' in."

"Slep' in! Weel, there's nae luck for sleepers-in, and ye've got the sack this time!"

"Hauf a shake, Maister Clark. Sleepers-in is whiles lucky."

"What! Would ye contradict me? Prove yer words, or——"

"I'll tell ye an antidote," said Johnny, "aboot a young chap that was for traivellin' to America. He had paid for his passage and packed up his duds; but on the mornin' he was to sail he slep' in and missed the boat."

"And lost a guid seetuation at the ither end, I'll be bound!"

"It was wi' a millionaire——."

"Then he nicht ha'e mairrit the millionaire's dochter and been a millionaire, hisselt! But he slep' in! Oh, dear, dear! He slep' in!"

"He did—and the boat gaed doon wi' everybody on board!"



A GUID SAXPENCEWORTH.

Mr McPhun, of the Clydeside village known as Deid Slow, took Mrs McPhun to town. They wandered around looking for a place of entertainment, with prices to suit Mr McPhun. Mrs McPhun was beginning to despair, when, at one o'clock, they came to a small picture house displaying the announcement—STALLS 6d. CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE 1 to 10-30. "This'll dae fine," said Mr McPhun; "there's a 'bus hame at 10-40, in ye gang, Teenie!"



ONE BETTER.

An English sportsman in the Highlands, not getting all the respect he expected from his ghillie, said—
“Look here, my man! You are evidently unaware that my family has been entitled to bear arms since the time of William the Conqueror.”

“Well, well, and you are fery welcome,” was the mild reply. “My family was entitled to bare legs since the time of Noah.”



THE BAWBEE.

For three evenings Mrs Craw's fireside conversation had been a dirge. Because of the loss of a halfpenny, she was unable to balance her housekeeping book.

In desperation Mr Craw contrived, surreptitiously, to deposit a halfpenny under the sofa and, after a discreet interval, persuaded her to make a final search. She spent the remainder of the evening in searching everywhere, save in the right direction ; but towards midnight she came to the sofa.

Behind his newspaper, Mr Craw, weary but hopeful, awaited the cry that would proclaim discovery, and mean peace.

At last it came.

"Have ye found it, Joanna ?" he merrily enquired.

"I've found a bawbee.....but it's no' the one I lost," she replied—and resumed the dirge.



DISTANCE LENDS.

At the Lammas Fair in a Fifeshire town good business was being done by the vendors of balloons. Mr Craw had, unfortunately, come out without his specs, and, as he strolled with Mrs Craw among the booths, he suddenly pointed into the distance, and said :—

"If they're no owre dear, Joanna, what dae ye say to a pun' o' thae plooms ?"



A COMMON COMPLAINT.

"In a' ma seeven-an'-thirty years o' mairrit life," says McCraw, "I ha'e never wance deceived ma wife—successfully."



CHECKMATE.

For years, Mr Wilks, a timid bachelor had endured the inattentions of his slovenly landlady ; but at last, exasperated beyond his patience, he determined to give her a fright. Having summoned her to the sitting-room, he put his mouth close to the mantelpiece and blew, raising an appalling cloud of dust. "What is the meaning of that ?" he demanded as sternly as he could.

"I couldna say," was the cool reply ; "but I think ye should see a doctor about your breith."



KISSES.

A Scotsman arranged with his pretty wife that every time he kissed her, he would put a bawbee in her little savings-bank—and he kept his bargain.

In time the bank became full. Having unlocked it, he turned out its contents on the table—and was not a little astonished to see no end of sixpences and shillings among the bawbees.

“What’s the meanin’ o’ this, Lizzie?” he asked.

“Oh, weel, John,” she replied, “it merely means that they werena a’ sae economical as you.”



THE SPOKESMAN.

Three drovers from the Outer Isles were putting up at an inn in Oban. Donald, who had seen a little more of the world than had the others, appointed himself spokesman in the English, and when they were seated in the tap-room before supper addressed the attendant in these breathless words:—

“Hey, waiter! Tea for coffee, two for wan, ham and eggs in ta parlour for everybody, and take this coat and hing it on the door at ta back of ta big nail where she’ll be sleeping till to-morrow’s morning, and be pleased to brought ben three drams of good whisky till her suppers be ready, and take your hurry neither, young man, my lad, and don’t be keeping us waiting all yesterdays about it, whatever, forbye!”



NEWS FROM ABERDEEN.

Aberdonians have ceased buying elastic bands. They give too much.



CONCISE.

In a funeral carriage a mourner addressed the stranger sitting opposite, in these words :

“Excuse me, but are you ony relation to the deceased ?”

And in these words the stranger replied :

“Uh-ha ! I’m the corp’s brither.”



NAE PLEASURE !

Mr Craw’s friend, the Funeral Undertaker, once remarked : “There’s nae pleasure at a funeral on a rainy day.”



A BAD CASE.

Mrs McNear had been laid up for some time, and the neighbours were wondering why no physician had been called in.

At last one of them put the question to the husband. "Aweel, ye see," confidentially replied Mr McNear, who loved not spending siller, "she's owre ill to see a doctor."



HAPPY THOUGHT.

For a number of Christmases Mr Abe R. Dean had dutifully "remembered" his spinster Aunt with an illuminated Calendar; but the annual disbursement—11d., including postage—was becoming more and more painful. Last year, however, he had an inspiration. He sent her a Perpetual Calendar.



REPLETE.

The Sunday School treat had been provided on a very generous scale, and one, at least, of the small boys had done himself not wisely, but too well. A kindly young man offered to carry him home.

"Ay, cairry me," murmured the little glutton, "but oh, dinna bend me!"



MODERN BUSINESS.

Mr Macgregor went into a Woolworth Store and, after inspecting some cork soles, asked to be furnished with particulars of the Firm's system of Deferred Payments, a plain van being essential.



THE FIRST SWEETIE SHOP.

When Adam was anxious his leddy to please,
On bouquets he didna waste money:
He gaed to a shop that was famed for bumbees
And bocht her a bucket o' honey.



POSTPONED.

They had been engaged for fourteen years. Time was when he had cheerfully watched her "put away" half-a-crown's worth, in the local tea-room, on a Saturday afternoon; but the allowance had gradually been reduced to six-pence. To-day, however, when she had had fivepence-worth he said—
"Could ye manage a thrup'ny pie, Maggie?"
Hopefully, yet coyly, she replied: "I believe I could, John."
"Weel," said John, "we can conseeder it next Seturday, if we're spared."



THRIFT.

A small girl rapped on a door in a Glasgow tenement, and when it was opened said:
"Please, Mistress McCosh, ma maw's for makin' soup the day, and I was to speer if ye wud kindly gi'e her the len' o' yer bane."
At this request Mrs McCosh drew herself up.
"Ye can tell yer maw that Mistress Robison has got it the day, and it's promised to Mistress Baikie for the morn; and, in ony case, I winna len' it to your maw ony mair. She biled it ower lang the last time."

MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

Mrs Forgie, with her little boy, entered one of the big warehouses in Argyle Street, and made known her wants to a "walker," a gentleman of extreme courtesy, but with exceedingly bandy legs.

"Flannel, madam? Certainly!" he said. "Will you kindly walk this way?"

"'Deed, sir," said Mrs Forgie, "I couldna walk that way if ye was gi'ein' me the shope; but I daursay ma laddie'll ha'e a try at it."

THE LAST DROP.

An East Coast farmer agreed with a poultry dealer in the town to deliver 20 hens on the following morning. Only 19, however, made their appearance at the time appointed, and it was coming on for the evening when the twentieth bird was brought in by the farmer himself.

"Guidsake, man," said the dealer, "ye're late wi' that ane!"

"So I am," replied the farmer, "but, ye see, she didna lay till the efternune."

HAPPY THOUGHT!

The Backend Mutual Improvement Society was out for its Annual Picnic, accompanied by Mr Peter Wagg, whose intellect was suspected to be below the average. On reaching the spot appointed, the members were dismayed to find the fuel for the fire, not only scarce, but damp, indeed, a fire seemed impossible till Peter stepped forward, saying, "I was feart ye micht ha'e some deeficulty, and so I brocht along this." Whereupon grateful exclamations were heard, and every eye was fastened upon a parcel, which Peter, all smiles, undid, disclosing a—GAS RING.



MANNERS.

Macgregor had been taken to tea at Aunt Purdie's—no treat to him.

"And how are you to-day?" said the hostess in her most patronising tones.

"Fine!"

"Fine—what?" said Aunt Purdie severely.

His mother, giving him a nudge whispered, "Ye should say, 'Fine, thank ye.'"

"Fine, thank ye," said Macgregor obediently. "I wis at the Zoo yesterday."

"Oh, indeed! Was you? And what did you see at the zoo?"

"Beasts, thank ye."



INTELLIGENCE.

A Scots farmer, having been elected to the School Board, called at the village school to test the intelligence of a class.

"Noo, boys, can ony o' ye tell me what a million is?"

Several scholars answered correctly.

"Vera guid! Weel, then, can ony o' ye tell me what naething is?"

There was a pause till a youngster at the back put up his hand.

"Please, mister, it's what ye gied me for haudin' your horse yesterday."

DONE !

In the smoke-room of a London boarding house the guest from Scotland had been boring everybody with tales of the wonderful things he had done in his time. "Well, now," said an Englishman wearily, at last, "suppose you tell us of something you can't do—and, by jove, I'll undertake to do it myself!" "Thenk ye!" replied Sandy. "I canna pay ma bill."



COINCIDENCE.

Mr Don McDee, for long regarded as a confirmed bachelor, astounded his friends, not only by getting married, but by choosing a lady with a wooden leg. The date of the wedding, by the way, coincided with the opening of the great coal strike.



HIS LAST JOKE.

A large severe-looking woman entered a photographer's studio and dashed a bunch of prints on the table.

"Here, mister," she cried, "ye've got to tak' thur yins back!"

"But what is wrong, madam?" enquired the photographer, and compared one of the portraits with her countenance. "This is really an excellent likeness."

"It's naething o' the sort! As sune as ma man seen it, he said it was a face like a plate o' soup!"

"Come, come, madam! Your good man is evidently fond of his joke."

"Joke! I would like to see him try it! The last joke he tried was fifteen years back—the nicht afore I mairrit him!"

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